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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 12 March 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

The Palestinian death toll continues to rise as Israel, the occupying Power, continues to traumatize and terrorize the more than 1.5 million Palestinians living in the besieged Gaza Strip. Since Friday, 9 March 2012, Israel's excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force has brutally killed 23 Palestinians, including children, women and elderly persons, and the number of injured has reached over 77, among them 20 children and 11 women. The tragic and continuous climb in the number of casualties is reflective of Israel's ongoing bloody onslaught against the Palestinian population in the Occupied Gaza Strip, in complete disregard and violation of all norms and rules of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Today, Monday, 12 March 2012, Israeli occupying forces launched vicious air strikes against the Gaza Strip for the fourth day in a row, killing an additional five Palestinians and injuring an additional 43, including 17 children and nine women. In one incident, Israeli occupying forces launched an air strike, directly attacking a number of students in North Gaza district, killing a 14-year-old and injuring another five students while they were playing in the playground near their school. Also today, Israeli occupying forces killed a 65-year-old man and his 30-year-old daughter in the Jabaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip as they were attempting to put out a fire in front of their home as a result of a previous Israeli air strike. In addition to death and injury, Palestinian residential homes, agricultural fields located near homes, schools and medical facilities were also destroyed as a result of indiscriminate Israeli air strikes.

The names of those Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip over the past four days by Israeli occupying forces are as follows: Zuhair Al-Qaisy, Mahmoud Hanani, Mohammed Al-Ghamri, Faek Saad, Mu'tasim Hajjaj, Obeid Al-Gharabli, Mohammed Harara, Hazem Qareqei', Shadi Al-Saiqli, Mohammed Al-Moghari, Mahmoud Najm, Ahmad Hajjaj, Mahdi Abu Shawish, Mansour Abu Nuseira, Hussein Al-Breim, Ahmad Dieb Salim, Ayoub Amer Useila (12 years old), Adel Al-Issi (60 years old), Hamadah Abu Mutlaq, Nayif Shaaban Qarmout (16 years

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old), Mohammed Mustafa Al-Hasoumi (65 years old), Faiza Mohammed Mustafa Al-Hasoumi and Ra'fat Abu Eid.

At the same time, over the past week, Israeli occupying forces also continued to violently raid Palestinian homes, villages, towns and cities across the West Bank to arrest and detain Palestinian civilians. Israeli raids that took place today, Monday, 12 March 2012, alone resulted in the arbitrary and illegal detention of 20 Palestinians, including at least three children, one as young as 15 years old. Even more tragic, Zakaria Abu Arram, 16 years old, from the town of Yatta, south of Al-Khalil (Hebron), was shot and killed by Israeli occupying forces during one of its arrest campaigns that took place on Thursday, 8 March 2012. The grave situation of Palestinian civilians in Israeli jails and detention centres remains an issue of great concern and of priority for the Palestinian people and their leadership. It should be put on record that 11 Palestinian prisoners were injured today, Monday, 12 March 2012, when Israeli prison guards raided Ashkelon prison in southern Israel. Illegal Israeli actions in this regard warrant serious attention by the international community. The occupying Power must be held to the same standard of international law to which all countries are held, and it must therefore be demanded that Israel comply with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law in connection with the Palestinian prisoners it continues to illegally imprison and detain.

The grave situation before us requires urgent attention and serious action by the international community. The Security Council must uphold its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It must reaffirm its rejection of all Israel's criminal acts and illegal, violent and provocative actions taken against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. It must be recalled that the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are entitled to protection under international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. We again repeat that the international community, including the Security Council, cannot remain silent or continue to only express regret or disappointment at Israel's violations. It is the responsibility of the international community to put an end to these crimes by the occupying Power, and this begins with holding Israel accountable under international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Palestinian people cannot remain the exception to this responsibility to protect civilians from such war crimes and atrocities.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 420 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 11 March 2012 (A/ES-10/548-S/2012/147), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations